



# Spice Narratives and the Triguna: An Integrated Semiotic–Narrative Analysis of Ayurvedic Psychology in *The Mistress of Spices*

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**Abstract.** *Mistress of Spices* is a romantic drama movie released in 2006 that was directed by Paul Mayeda Berges. The novel by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni served as the inspiration for this film. *Mistress of Spices* is a romantic drama movie that was released in 2006. This movie is directed by Paul Mayeda Berges and based on the novel by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. The story revolves around the character named Tilo, who is played by Aiswarya Rai, an immigrant from India who runs a spice shop in San Francisco. Tilo has a unique, magical connection with spices and uses them to help her customers overcome personal struggles. This movie blends the elements of magical realism, romance, and immigrant experiences. It focuses on tradition, belongingness, and self-discovery. It has a rich feature of spicy rituals and Indian traditions. This study examines the representation of spices through the lens of Ayurvedic psychology's Triguna theory, which is considered part of "Mansa dosha" that helps to understand the formation of psychological features and predisposition to mental health conditions and personality traits. The three gunas are Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. From the movie, spice depiction scenes are chosen and within that we have tried to analyse semiotic and narrative analysis. For this, we used Barthe's semiotic framework that is denotation, connotation and myths. We also incorporated coding of triguna theory based on the Ayurvedic textual descriptions. After that narrative mapping was done locating these scenes within the movie. This is further developed by thematic interpretation linking plot events to classical Ayurvedic principles and cultural meanings. The findings are expected to reveal a pattern in how the movie has its transition between guna states, often using the spices as character development. This also shows how these transitions reflect the broader cultural and psychological narratives of healing, desires, and identity.

**Keywords:** Ayurvedic psychology, Triguna theory, narrative analysis, spices, Indian Knowledge Systems, food narratives, cultural psychology

# 1 Introduction

Paul Mayeda Berges adapted his version of *The Mistress of Spices* was released in 2005 based on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's famous novel. It represents a unique cinematic investigation of immigrants through a window of spices proclaiming its healing properties. The film portrays Tilo, who was played by Aiswarya Rai, who is an immigrant from India and runs a spice shop in San Francisco. She has a mysterious bond with the spices that enables her to understand the personal struggles of her clients and helps them. The framework clearly portrayed how traditional Indian cultural concepts are depicted in modern scenarios. Additionally, in nowadays the relationship between food, culture, narrative, and psychology has received significant attention in contemporary films (Alex & Justin, 2023; Zhuang, 2019). Consequently, this might help us to understand how food, culture, and behavior of people are connected in a specific culture.

Kapil and Agarwal (2016) conducted a study entitled "The Mistress of Spices: A Study in the Light of South Asian Traditional Therapeutic Practices," used a literary analysis meant to examine Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel as a representation of South Asian diasporic experiences through traditional healing systems. The findings of the study highlighted how the work of Divakaruni uses spices as a figurative expression. This study also tries to evaluate on how immigrant women struggles during certain challenges in their life like discrimination and emotional distress. It also give an insights about how they use spices as tools to heal their problems. It mainly connects how South Asian women could deal with the contemporary psychological issues with the old healing practices that is available yet not seen.

Another study entitled "The 'Magic' of Masala: An Analysis of Indian Spices as a Psychological Healer based on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*", was conducted by Goswami in 2021. This study analysed the influence of Ayurveda in comprehensive restoration. The findings reveals that the psychological disruptions are arised due to the imbalances in psyche, which is the main reason of "vyadhi" or "ailment".

With this notion, use of banaspati or plant derived products were recommended to maintain the connection between mind and body. The analysis showed that novel tries to bring up the traditional practices that portrays the spices as a figurative expressions for psychological issues and wellbeing.

In another study, "Exploring Mythical Realism and Diasporic Identity in *The Mistress of Spices*: A Multifaceted Analysis" conducted by Anu and Deepa (2024) used a multidisciplinary qualitative textual analysis in order to understand how Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel blends myth, magical realism, and diasporic consciousness to portray the immigrant experience in the United States. The analysis of the study shows that spices used in this novel as a symmbolic agents of healing and transformation. Additionally, it also shows cultural memory while the protagonist Tilo embodies the complexity of diasporic identity through her negotiation of duty, longing, and cultural dislocation. Along with that the researchers also attempted to understand how the integration of Hindu mythology, magical inclusion, and immigrant narratives bids a rich framework for comprehending the conflicts between tradition and assimilation,

ultimately demonstrating how cultural myths and magical realism influence diasporic psychological and emotional realities of people.

Moreover, in another study by Karthikeyeni and Lathrani (2025), a study was conducted on 'Transmission of Cultural Memory in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*'. In this study, the researchers wanted to understand how cultural memory, oral traditions and myths have changed the acculturative identities. Here the protagonist, Tilo plays as a cross cultural mediator who tries to interact with the spices and helps to pass on the traditional values across the generations. The findings in their study reveals that rituals, myths, spices and oral stories demonstrates cultural memory and it acts as a force that helps them to navigate the issues they are facing as a immigrant.

Based on another study, it shows that spices hold significant role in culture as well as psychological challenges in Indian traditions. It doesn't just act as a culinary ingredient but also as a therapeutic agent with symbolic and healing properties (Joseph & Voeks, 2021). Ayurveda principles view food and herbs as a means of achieving psychological and spiritual balance as well. In this film, the representation of spices completely aligns with that principle.

Therefore, this study tries to employ an innovative interdisciplinary approach that combines Triguna theory of Ayurveda Psychology along with Roland Barthe's semiotic framework and narrative analysis. This study tries to examine how spices function as a psychological and narrative device in the movie *Mistress of Spices*. According to the Triguna theory, there are three personality traits: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. The characteristics of Sattva include purity, clarity, harmony, and balance, while the characteristics of Rajas include passion, activity, and stimulation. The characteristics of Tamas include inertia, dullness, and obscurity (Hankey, 2006; Kuppaswami & Rao, 2021). Mental states, behavioral pattern, and overall psychological well-being of a person are influenced by these gunas.

Therefore, to examine how spices function as a psychological and cinematic narrative tool in the movie *Mistress of Spices*, the present study integrates three analytical approaches. First, Barther's semiotic analysis, a systematic method for understanding meaning embedded in multiple layers of the movie, especially regarding spice representations. This analysis gives us a picture moving from denotative aspect to connotative undertone. Second, narrative analysis is used that explores how spice-related scenes align well with structure of the movie, character presentation, and thematic progress. Finally, the by means of Triguna theory can explain culturally rooted perspective about the personality characteristics of the main character in the movie.

The significance of the current study stems from its contribution to several academic domains. It integrates ideas of Indian Knowledge System to the Contemporary Knowledge System by giving emphasis to psychological frameworks explained in Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita for interpreting modern narratives. In addition, study tell us about how color, taste, flavor, texture, and aroma of food function as narrative and psychological devices in Indian cinema. Furthermore, the study also offers insights into diasporic personality formation and healing the psychological issues with cultural practices.

In light of the literature review it is clear that no studies integrated the perspectives of Indian Knowledge System with contemporary narratives of ‘The Mistress of Spices’. The existing literature mostly studied themes of diaspora, identity crisis, and magical realism (Anu & Deepa, 2024; Bhardwaj, 2024; Lamor, 2011; Rajan, 2002). Although previous studies provided cultural and literature dimension of ‘The Mistress of Spices’ the understanding of how the psychological and therapeutic aspects of the dealt in this movie is not analyzed systematically. Therefore, this study will fill this gap by providing structured method to examine psychological dimensions of ‘The Mistress of Spices’.

The research questions as follows:

- How do spice representations in the ‘The Mistress of Spices’ explain each gunas-Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, according to Ayurvedic psychology?
- How triguna patterns are identified throughout the movie?
- How do Barthes’ semiotic levels such as denotation, connotation, and myth, reveal the cultural and psychological significance of imagery?
- What therapeutic and transformational narratives emerge from the integration of spice symbolism with character development?

## 2 Method

For the present study, the qualitative content analysis approach was used. This research design integrated semiotic analysis, narrative mapping, and coding. In addition, this exploratory design aiming at developing a comprehensive framework of how spice representation in the movie working as a psychological as well as narrative device.

1. Semiotic analysis for spice related scenes (Barthe’s three-level framework)
2. Narrative mapping to locate the spice demonstrations in the movie
3. Triguna coding to understand the changes and trasitions in the psychological states

### 2.1 Data collection

For this study, ‘The Mistress of Spices (2005) directed by Paul Mayeda was considered as the first source of data. The movie was about 92 minutes and it was watched in multiple times in order to get each spice oriented scenes and the researchers ensured its full coverage. The initial screenings were used to create a general narrative and thematic framework. With more viewings, more importance were given to small detail oriented scenes related to spices.

The process included:

4. Visual representation of spices or spice-related objects
5. Dialogues that refer sto pices or spice-related things
6. Character interactions mediated by spice exchange or consultation
7. Narrative moments where spices appear to influence the plot development or character states.

23 scenes were used for detailed analysis after all these criterias were meteed. The researchers also used the original novel of “The Mistress of Spices’ by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (1997), Ayurvedic texts like charaka samhitha, Susruta Samhitha and other secondary literatures were used to develop the study.

## 2.2 Semiotic Analysis Framework

Once the scenes were selected , semiotic analysis was used to assess it systematically. Three level framework of Barthe were used to do this analysis. In this, denotative analysis conveys direct or surface level meaning of the content. Connotaive analysis is where the latent meanings like symbolic, cultural meanings and emotional meanings which is associated to the content. In this movie, denotative analysis was done by screening each scenes that involved spices, how they are presented visually, the container in which they use, the preparation time and recipes. By dialogue exchanges the references to spice, usage, properties and cultural meanings. Physical and gestural actions of the protagonist and other secondary characters were also captured.

## 2.3 Narrative Mapping Approach

Narrative mapping approach involves analyzing scenes with spice related sequences from the main plot of the movie using pre-existing narrative framework. Exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution are the mainly mapped elements from the movie.

Each spice-related scenes extracted were placed within the structure and analyzed for it narrative function and the character development relationship.

The character arc analysis focused the psychological and emotional states of main characters, especially Tilo, throughout spice mediated interactions. In this, character behavior, emotional expressions, dialogue patterns, and relationship dynamics before, during, and after spice encounters were documented. Additionally, special attention was given to instants of apparent transformation or spice interaction facilitating insights.

Thematic analysis was used to examine and identify how spice-related themes evolve throughout the narrative. Healing and transformation, cultural identity and authenticity, tradition and modernity, individual and community needs, and finally the relationship between physical and spiritual well-being were the identified themes using thematic analysis.

## 2.4 Triguna Coding System

The Triguna coding system was done based on classical Ayurvedic approach and contemporary research. The dialogue deliveries reflecting each gunas classified in each guna groups. For example, dialogue deliveries reflect balanced judgement, prosocial motivation, and spiritual insights were coded as sattva guna.

The sattva guna qualities of an individual includes calmness, clarity, wisdom, compassion, contentment, balance, and harmony. Whereas Rajas traits characterized by

passion, ambition, energy, need for achievement, and experience strong emotions. In the present study, both positive and challenging aspects of Rajas were noted. That includes physical agitation, rapid speech pattern, competitive behaviors, and attachment to outcomes. Furthermore, the characteristics of Tamas represents inertia, ignorance, lethargy, confusion, resistance to change, lack of motivation, and stubbornness. Ignorance pattern, withdrawal behavioral tendencies, confusion and cognitive block, expressions indicating depressive behaviors were noted as Tamas characteristics in this study. Along with that the core and fundamental functions of Tamas such as rest, stability, and grounding were also documented.

We have done the coding procedure by reviewing and analyzing movie scenes independently by researchers and then compared the interpretations to reduce subjectivity. Finally, the disagreements were resolved by discussions and referring to the reference texts, especially Ayurvedic books.

2.5 Analytical Integration

The analytical integration was done by integrating results from semiotic analysis, narrative mapping approach, and triguna coding. To examine the relationship between guna states, narrative position, and semiotic meaning, crosstabulation matrices were created. After comparing findings of each approach, we validated interpretations and identified themes. Through consulting with experts in this field, Indian Psychology, member checking was conducted to establish the validity of the results.

3 Results and Discussion

Table 1. Semiotic Analysis Results

| Semiotic level | Category               | Key findings                           | Evidences                                                          |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Denotative     | Visual Representations | Rich inventory of spice presentations  | Traditional containers, elaborate arrangements, preparation scenes |
|                | Spice Types            | Frequently depicted varieties          | Turmeric, red chili powder, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves             |
|                | Application Methods    | Multiple therapeutic delivery modes    | Food mixing, skin application, incense burning, oil infusion       |
| Connotative    | Cultural Markers       | Authenticity and traditional knowledge | Cultural identity maintenance, immigrant memories                  |

|                   |                             |                                        |                                                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | Sensory Associa-<br>tions   | Embodied cultural<br>memories          | Warm colors (comfort), red<br>chilies (passion)                   |
|                   | Therapeutic Prop-<br>erties | Extended healing ca-<br>pabilities     | Physical, emotional, psycho-<br>logical, spiritual transformation |
|                   | Gender Roles                | Feminine wisdom<br>associations        | Tilo's spice mastery, nurturing<br>capabilities                   |
| Mythologi-<br>cal | Ideological Posi-<br>tions  | Traditional<br>knowledge valorization  | Challenge to Western medical<br>paradigms                         |
|                   | Cultural Myths              | Authenticity and<br>healing narratives | Therapeutic efficacy, feminine<br>wisdom, immigrant healing       |

In semiotic analysis, at the denotative level, the film demonstrated a rich visual and textual inventory of spices including a variety of ingredients such as turmeric, red chilli powder, cardamom, cinnamon, and cloves. These spices were illustrated in traditional conditioners that added the richness, highlighting the color, texture, and sensory depth. The scenes of grinding, measuring, and blending spices showed ritualistic precision and specialized knowledge as well.

Table 1 shows the results of semiotic analysis. The semiotic levels includes Denotative, Connotative, and Mythological levels. In the denotative level the movie presents visual representations of spice presentations using traditional containers of spices, its arrangement, and preparation. The variety of spices such as turmeric, red chilli powder, cardamom, cinnamon, and cloves and its containers illustrated and highlighted the color, texture, and sensory depth. Additionally, the scenes showing preparation methods such as grinding, measuring, and blending spices illustrated ritualistic precision and specialized knowledge as well. Dialogue deliveries showed the descriptions of specific spices and their uses that reinforce the literal properties and applications of spices with healing, culinary, and ritual contexts.

At the connotative level, spices depicted layered cultural and symbolic meanings. Spices are illustrated in the form of authenticity, ancestral wisdom, immigrant identity, and maintenance. Warm and vibrant usage of color tones evoked emotional and embodied cultural memories. Recurring themes included healing, holistic well-being, and transformation framed within traditional Indian knowledge systems. Gendered connotations emerged through Tilo's portrayal as a feminine custodian of intuitive, nurturing, and mystical healing capabilities.

The film also promoted the mythology of cultural knowledge, its therapeutic efficacy, and the superiority of traditional healing systems and their influence. This film also shows the superiority of the traditional healing system over the modern systems.

Spices were considered as Universal agents that are capable of resolving emotional, physical, and identity-based issues. The film implies that immigrants can solve their emotional struggles by reconnecting with their cultural traditions. Although, the movie also depicting that these traditional roles can be limiting. For instance, in that movie, Tilo faces rigid expectations which highlighting how cultural customs may both empower and limit people because they restrict Tilo from what her heart desires.

3.1 Narrative Structure and Spice Scene Distribution

| Narrative Phase | Scene Numbers | Scene Count | Percentage | Primary Function                |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Exposition      | 1-5           | 5           | 21.7%      | Character/setting establishment |
| Rising Action   | 6-14          | 9           | 39.1%      | Conflict development            |
| Climax          | 15-17         | 3           | 13.0%      | Peak emotional intensity        |
| Falling Action  | 18-21         | 4           | 17.4%      | Resolution initiation           |
| Resolution      | 22-23         | 2           | 8.7%       | Traditional healing completion  |
| Total           | 1-23          | 23          | 100%       | Complete narrative arc          |

The table 2 shows the results of narrative analysis of the movie. Here we screened about 23 spice centered scenes and organized it into 5 narrative phases (Exposition, Rising action, Climax, Falling action, and Resolution). This movie develops from character building which leads to conflicts. A peak emotional intensity is shown in the movie and through traditional practices it is finally healed. In the whole movie, the spices is illustrated as a symbolic tool for healing and cultural learning. Rising actions shows the dilemma between the need to follow the traditions but also her personal emotions and needs. In the climax , the protagonist reaches in a peak emotional stage followed by the falling action where it takes a turning point in resolution. It is shown a complete resolution through traditional healing practices in the end.



**Table 2.** Guna Transition Patterns and Mechanisms

| Transition Type     | Initial State         | Final State               | Spice Catalysts                              | Visual Indicators                      | Character Behaviors                         |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Tamas → Rajas       | Stagnation, confusion | Activation, determination | Ginger, black pepper, chili, clove, cinnamon | Brightening lighting, dynamic movement | Animated behavior, goal-directed action     |
| Rajas → Sattva      | Emotional intensity   | Balance, clarity          | Cardamom, rose, sandalwood                   | Harmony emphasis, integration visuals  | Improved judgment, compassion               |
| Complex Transitions | Variable states       | Cycling patterns          | Mixed spice interventions                    | Non-linear progression                 | Temporary regressions, eventual integration |

The table represents the information regarding how the sattva guna is represented in the movie. The sattva oriented scenes can be seen with the soothing lighting and music. Visuals provided serenity. To create a spiritual ambience cardamom, turmeric and sandalwood were used. It gives an emotional clarity and wisdom too.

Rajas in nature is dynamic, stimulative and agitative. The desire, emotional reactivity and passion were shown through the heightened energy in the characters. Instead of warm, dramatic lightning and fast music was used. To show the passion, arousal, instability and restlessness spices like blackpepper, ginger, chilli, clove, cinnamon were used.

Tamas is heavy, dark and dull. So the depiction in movie were shown with dark visuals, muted background scores. The main characters were seen as with ignorance, confusion, lethargy and lack of awareness. In the movie we could see the protagonist while reaching for the spices she saw spoiled ones which indicates disorientation and psychological dullness.

The narrative analysis also shows how the transition happens within the guna states throughout the movie. The transition just doesn't happen in one sequence of situation in the movie, but it is seen as repeated exposure with the traditional practices which shows the cumulative nature of this film. These shifts can be seen by direct spice interventions, rituals and community based healing that encourages long term transformation.

**Table 3.** Cultural Narrative Patterns

| Pattern Type      | Core Principle                            | Manifestation in Film                             | Healing Function              |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Authenticity      | Traditional knowledge value               | Spice wisdom is portrayed as inherently effective | Validates cultural practices  |
| Integration       | Traditional-contemporary synthesis        | Blending approaches for the diaspora context      | Bridges cultural gaps         |
| Transmission      | Intergenerational knowledge sharing       | Tilo's teaching and guidance                      | Preserves cultural continuity |
| Community Healing | Individual healing strengthens collective | Personal transformations benefit the community    | Strengthens social bonds      |

To study cultural patterns, 4 themes were identified. They are Authenticity, Integration, Transmission, and Community healing. In this study, as a core principle we could see the traditional values and knowledge. Here spices are seen as inherently effective and it validates the use of spices in healing problems faced by people. In integration, how contemporary and traditional practices could be blended is taken into consideration. In the movie we could see Tilo as a immigrant in San Francisco still holding the traditional values which helps to bridge the gap. Tilo's teachings and helping others in their struggles also depicts transmission of knowledge from generations to the contemporary world. Finally the community healing explains how individual healing strengthens the collective nature in us. It also shows how personal transformations benefit the community and strengthens the social bonds. Rather than understanding the intrapsychic nature, healing is demonstrated in a way that could enhance interpersonal connections and social cohesions.

**Table 4.** Psychological Healing Trajectories

| Trajectory Type | Initial Condition | Intervention Approach | Outcome Indicators | Success Rate |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------|
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------|

|                          |                                                |                                                   |                                 |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Crisis-to-Integration    | Acute psychological distress (Tamas-dominant)  | Intensive spice interventions + community support | Balanced psychological state    | High             |
| Stagnation-to-Activation | Chronic dysfunction (Tamas + Rajas elements)   | Gradual spice interventions                       | Increased energy and motivation | Moderate to High |
| Agitation-to-Balance     | Excessive Rajas (high energy, poor regulation) | Calming spices + wisdom teachings                 | Emotional stability             | High             |

Three psychological trajectories used in the movie is also discussed here. The first one is the crisis to integration trajectory. Here the protagonist experiences severe stress in the beginning stages where we could interpret it as *tamas* dominant state. With proper spice based interventions balance is attained. It also give emphasis to communal support as well.

The stagnation-to-activation trajectory represents main characters of the movie experiencing chronic dysfunctions which is mostly due to the *tamas* and *rajas* components. From low energy through gradual introduction of spice interventions their improvement is notices which enhances motivations and encouragement.

Finally, the Agitation to balance where the *rajas* components is more with very high energy and poor regulation. Here we could see a unstructures and dyorganised energy. With spices that are calming like *cumin*,*cardamon*,*coriander*,*cumin* and wisdom teachings the character attains emotional stability to mitigate psychological distress.

Customized psychological assessments, therapies that identifies with contemporary knowledge along with the healing practices into daily routines are common therapeutic alliances that could apply to all.

**Table 5.** Therapeutic Efficacy Indicators

|        |                     |                     |                               |
|--------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Domain | Specific Indicators | Measurement Context | Consistency Across Characters |
|--------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|

|                 |                                      |                                             |                  |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Physical Health | Improved symptoms, vitality          | Direct observation, character reports       | High             |
| Psychological   | Mood, self-confidence, communication | Behavioral changes, dialogue analysis       | High             |
| Social          | Relationships, community connections | Interaction quality, social engagement      | Moderate to High |
| Spiritual       | Purpose, wisdom, inner peace         | Character development, narrative resolution | High             |
| Cultural        | Identity integration, authenticity   | Cultural expression, value alignment        | High             |

From this movie, we have tried to understand the therapeutic efficacies too. For that separate domains were found like physical, psychological, relational, cultural, and spiritual outcomes. In the first domain that is physical, it is evident for the movie when the characters improve their energy, health, mental clarity and appearance. Psychologically the characters were able to overcome their struggles, improve their emotional regulation, cognition and confidence. In the social element, the importance of relational outcomes show strengthened communication, empathy and quality interpersonal relationships. Culture, the final domain is linked to the restoration of traditional practices where the culture identity, transgenerational dynamics and active community involvement is encouraged. The spiritual factors show the character development, heightened purpose, wisdom and inner peace which aligns with the transcendental values.

By considering the whole framework, we could understand that this healing is a holistic approach and not a single faceted one. Rather than focusing solely on the symptoms, there are interrelated areas that should be considered.

**Table 6.** Character Arc Development (Guna Progression)

| Character | Initial Guna State                    | Transition Process       | Final Guna State                          | Spice-Mediated Interventions                |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Tilo      | Tamas-dominant (withdrawal, rigidity) | Through Rajas activation | Sattva integration (wisdom, authenticity) | Multiple spice interactions, self-discovery |

|                      |                                                   |                               |                                |                                     |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Haroun               | Rajas-dominant (passion, restriction questioning) | Gradual moderation            | Sattva integration (balance)   | Cardamom, rose-based interventions  |
| Secondary Characters | Variable initial states                           | Spice-facilitated transitions | Improved psychological balance | Context-specific spice applications |

This table discuss about the character arc development in the movie. It shows how the guna progression occurs in the main characters in the movie. When we consider Tilo, she was in Tamas dominant in the beginning. Tamas is usually seen as low,clouded, withdrawn and passive which could end up in stagnation. When she eventually finds love, rajas gets activated which is shown by need for sexual intimacy, restless, reactive and impulsive. It is seen as her mid stage development. It arises a conflict between her own desires and tradtional values.In the final stages, Tilo acheives sattva. Her last interactions with the spices were balanced, clear , calm and peaceful which resulted in regulated behavior and overall wellbeing. She integrated tamas and rajas in a balanced way rather than allowing them to dominate.

Similar patterns has been analysed within the secondary characters as well. Haroun developed a friendship with Tilo which changed into love where the rajas driven actions were found within him. Gradually he also attained a sattvic trait balancing botht the tamas and rajas components.All these shows effective psychological integration of characters with the spice interactions.

## 4 Conclusion

This study was about interpreting the narratives in the *The Mistress of Spices* by combining the psychological constructs along with the contemporary analytical tools.

This study had tried to connect spices to psychological states, cultural meaning and character progression by incorporating the triguna theory along with semiotic and narrative analysis.The findings has been found to align with the available concepts of Ayurveda. The results could be utilized to reproduce a valid triguna coding system which may be used in other cultural texts. This also brings an insights about traditional healing and practices and its importance in contemporary society.

This study also provides a insight on how indigeneous knowledge system may help as a analytical frameworks in film and cultural studies.This study also gives importance to tradtional knowledge as a methodological foundation within the academic research now and provides a culturally responsible narrative.

In future researches, comparative analysis across cultural texts could be adopted, more empirical evidences of healing practices and community based collaborations. In general the study tries to prove that traditional psychological frameworks are

very relevant and need to be more explored along with the contemporary innovations and practices.

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